

these medical professionals as a condition approval of a waiver submission.

The amendment would require the American Academy of Pediatrics or other state medical society to survey and certify that the state's children have access to a sufficient number of pediatricians and specialists, should a state request a waiver from federal SCHIP requirements.

States have a variety of policy options to ensure that an adequate physician workforce is available in the state and this amendment would encourage those states to exercise those options.

The growth of the number of pediatricians per child has been positive over the past decade.

We should ensure that this momentum is sustained and this amendment will do just that.

I think this is an amendment that should have broad bipartisan support because its goal is ensuring access to needed medical professionals for our children.

More broadly, in the coming years this country will face a physician workforce shortage and this committee and this Congress needs to begin addressing this now.

I look forward to working with the members of this committee on this very broad and complicated issue, but this amendment would be a good first step.

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 3162, AS REPORTED [BY THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS]

Offered by Mr. Burgess of Texas
(CHAMP amendment)

Add at the end of subtitle E of title I the following new section:

SEC. ____ . LIMITATION ON APPROVAL OF SCHIP WAIVERS.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall not approve any application submitted by a State for a waiver of any provision of title XXI of the Social Security Act unless—

(1) the State has certified that there is access to an adequate level of pediatricians, pediatric specialists and pediatric sub-specialists for targeted low-income children covered under the State child health plan under such title; and

(2) the State includes in such application the results of a survey, that may be conducted by the American Academy of Pediatrics, a State professional medical society, or other qualified organization, that establishes that such an adequate level exists on a per capita child basis.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) for purposes of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert a statement for the RECORD refuting the fact that this has anything to do with undocumented children. The fact is that the current provision prohibits undocumented children from getting health care, but if we don't pass it, it will deny tens of thousands of children who are legally eligible.

Mr. BURGESS. I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry, where are we?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection has been heard. The gentleman ob-

jected. It's for the gentleman from Michigan to yield time.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. So Mr. DINGELL controls the time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That's correct.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) 1 minute.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. Speaker, today is one of the most exciting days since I've come to the Congress, having been elected first in 1992. I think today is a day of history, a day of history for the children of our country, because the fact is that there are nearly 9 million American children without guaranteed access to health care in our Nation today. I think that is a national shame.

Today, we correct that. We build on a successful bipartisan program of Republican and Democratic Governors, of leaders in the Congress past, of a program that has worked.

It has not been riddled by fraud, and what we do today very simply is add 5 million American children in the rolls of health care. It is private insurance for almost all of the States.

We also strengthen Medicare. I would suggest that my friends on this side of the aisle are on the wrong side of history.

□ 1500

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman of the committee from the great State of Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentlelady from California who said this is a great day in history, it was a great day in history when, in 1997, the Republicans, who had the majority, initiated and started this program. The Democrats are saying this is a great day, what a great day, when the Republicans started the SCHIP program.

Now, this bill, you have heard it all before. Obviously, it creates a new entitlement, crowds out private insurance with government coverage, offers perverse incentives to States; and, my friends, it contains a huge tax increase, with more on the way. Lastly, it punishes Medicare beneficiaries. This is very troubling, particularly in Florida. We have so many seniors that actually use Medicare Advantage.

The fact that they are going to eliminate this program to pay for this is really outrageous. It will disproportionately harm racial minorities and rural senior citizens by taking funds away from Medicare Advantage, a successful, lower-cost option for health care for seniors and use it to enroll and federally insure adult men and women who have the ability to work and receive health care from their employers in the open market.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, a member of the Health Subcommittee, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

Pending that, I would explain that he knows that the NAACP, in a letter of endorsement, has said that this legislation fills a much-needed gap that currently exists in health care services for some of the most vulnerable citizens, low-income children, seniors and the disabled.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, health care is a basic human right. It is unacceptable to see a young child die because his family could not afford for him to see a dentist. This should never, ever, happen in the United States of America. It is wrong. It must not be tolerated any longer, and today we said "no more".

This bill would give 6 million children access to health care. For our seniors who rely on Medicare, this bill helps our low-income seniors and makes prevention more affordable.

I applaud the work of Chairman RANGEL and Chairman STARK for making these important improvements. I am proud to have worked on this bill to help those who suffer from chronic kidney disease and end-stage renal disease receive the highest quality care and to take the first of many steps towards preventing these terrible diseases.

Until we can make health care right for every American, we have a moral mission, a mission and a mandate to start with the most vulnerable among us, our children and our seniors. We can do no less. Vote "yes" on the CHAMP Act. Do it now. Do it today.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire of the time remaining on each side on this part of the bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 18 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Michigan has 22½ minutes remaining.

The gentleman from California has 19 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Louisiana has 30 minutes remaining.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to a distinguished member of the committee from the great State of Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), the winning pitcher on the congressional baseball team.

(Mr. SHIMKUS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, under the current Illinois SCHIP program, it covers up to 200 percent of poverty, \$41,300 in annual income for a family of four; 26,830, or 31 percent of all families with children under the age of 18, in my district are already eligible for either Medicaid or SCHIP.

In this bill, Democrats have opposed cutting at least \$194 billion in Medicare spending. Specifically, the Democrats have proposed cutting Medicare spending for 6,070 seniors in my district who